

How to Use the IT Staff Augmentation Full Service and Niche Contracts

COMMBUYS Contract/Blanket Description: ITS63StaffAugCat1
MMARS #: ITS63StaffAugCat1* and ITS63StaffAugCat3*
Contract Duration: 07/01/2016 to 06/30/2021 Options to renew: None
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Last change date: 7/14/2016

Contract Summary

This contract is for “full service” placements of temporary IT staff (“Resources”), where Commonwealth Agencies post job requirements and the ITS63 Vendors submit candidate resumes for consideration by the Commonwealth Agency. If your Agency has recruited a Resource on its own, use Contract ITS63StaffAug2a or ITS63StaffAug2b.

The "Niche" category is new, and includes vendors who are specialized on providing resources in a particular "niche" area, such as PeopleSoft, Meditech, Tableau, and Accela resources. Otherwise, except as noted, these contracts work exactly the same way.

Please see [Locating Attachments on COMMBUYS](#) to find the documents referenced in this Guide.

Benefits and Cost Savings

- Competition for every placement results in good rates
- Over 40 vendors available under "Full Service," and 16 vendors under "Niche," to recruit and provide candidates

Who Can Use This Contract?

Applicable Procurement Law: MGL c. 7, § 22; c. 30, § 51, § 52; 801 CMR 21.00

Eligible Entities:

01. Cities, towns, districts, counties and other political subdivisions
02. Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches, including all Departments and elected offices therein;
03. Independent public authorities, commissions and quasi-public agencies
04. Local public libraries, public school districts and charter schools;
05. Public Hospitals, owned by the Commonwealth;
06. Public institutions of high education
07. Public purchasing cooperatives;
08. Non-profit, UFR-certified organizations that are doing business with the Commonwealth;
09. Other states and territories with no prior approval by the State Purchasing Agent required; and

10. Other entities when designated in writing by the State Purchasing Agent.

Pricing and Acquisition Methods

Pricing

A “[Rate Card](#),” updated periodically, determines the maximum rates which Vendors can charge for particular job titles. Rate Card 5 applies to Executive Department agencies. All other Commonwealth Agencies may use Rate Card 3 or Rate Card 5.

If an Agency does not receive satisfactory resumes using the Maximum Rate Card rates and wishes to post at a higher rate, they may petition Ellen Wright (ellen.wright@state.ma.us), the designee of the Commonwealth’s Chief Information Officer, for a variance from the Rate Card.

Prompt Pay Discounts: All vendors offer a 5% Prompt Pay Discount for payments made within 30 days.

Acquisition Methods

Services will be obtained on a time and materials basis only. Travel may be paid only with the prior written consent of the Commonwealth Agency.

How to Use this Contract

Review the list of [Niche specialties](#). If there is a specialty applicable to your posting, you may read the vendor’s description of their services posted on COMMBUYS as "Niche Specialty Descriptions from Vendor RFR Response" (bidders were limited to 250 words or less). If you wish to use a Niche vendor, you may limit your posting to only Niche vendors offering services in that area. Or, you may post for both; 1) a particular Niche, and 2) Full Service Vendors, (two postings will be needed in that case). Niche vendors may only submit resumes in their listed Niche; Full Service vendors are not limited, but may not bid on a posting specified as being limited to Niche Vendors (StaffAugCat3).

There are three steps for obtaining IT Resources under this Contract, explained in more detail [below](#):

1. Post the position on COMMBUYS and select a candidate from the resumes received. COMMBUYS posting is required for all positions to be filled under this contract except for non-Executive agencies (see [alternate posting process](#)).
2. Notify the Vendors that a candidate has been selected and sign an agreement with the selected Vendor.
3. “On-board” the Resource (obtain required forms before the Resource can start work).

Posting the Job and Choosing a Resource

1. Select a job title from the applicable Rate Card attached to the contract on COMMBUYS. Executive Department agencies must use Rate Card 5, others may use either Rate Card 3 or Rate Card 5. If you cannot find a job title that is an exact match with your requirements, choose the closest match and add additional qualifications (i.e., years of experience with specific tools) to the Job Specification Template.

2. Review and complete the Job Specification Template attached to the contract on COMMBUYS. There are several decisions you will need to make when completing it – for example, whether face-to-face interviews are needed, and whether you wish to be able to select a candidate before the deadline for resume submission. The Template also provides a place to include three specific questions for the Vendors to answer regarding each Candidate, which you must customize for each posting. The purpose of the questions is both to facilitate resume review and to establish that the candidate's resume was actually reviewed by someone to determine how well the Candidate matched your job specifications. Under ITS53 many resumes were submitted that appeared to have been selected by a computer doing a keyword match between the resume and the job specification, and not by a human reviewer.

Although use of this Template is not mandatory, it was designed by representatives of the Commonwealth Departments who use the contract most frequently, and it is strongly recommended for use in conjunction with the Candidate Bid Sheet Submission Form described below.

3. Review and complete the Candidate Bid Sheet Submission Form.
This form is optional but has been proven highly successful by one of the largest users of ITS53, and includes information such as the actual Resource pay rate, the Resource's past experience with the Commonwealth, and the answers to the questions described in item 2, above (these questions must match the questions that you have customized in the Job Specification Template).
4. Tips to keep in mind:
 - Choose a candidate as quickly as possible. Candidates with skills that are in high demand historically remain available for a short time.
 - Check for duplicate resumes submitted by different vendors. General guidance is that if, at the time candidates have been selected for interviews, resumes for the same candidate have been submitted by multiple vendors:
 - The ITS63 vendor who submitted the lowest bill rate will be contacted to arrange the interview.
 - If bill rates are the same for all ITS63 vendors who submitted the same candidate, the ITS63 vendor who submitted the highest Candidate Pay Rate will be contacted to arrange the interview.
 - If the bill rate and Candidate Pay Rate are the same for all ITS63 vendors who submitted the same candidate, the ITS63 vendor whose submission was received earliest by the Contracting Department will be contacted to arrange the interview.
 - If the Contracting Department selects the candidate for the position, the ITS63 vendor who was contacted by the Contracting Department to arrange the interview will be awarded the contract.

Whether or not your Department chooses to follow the above process, it is a good practice to determine in advance how duplicate resumes for the same candidate will be handled. This cannot be prevented and there should be a process in place so that it does not slow down the candidate selection process.

- “Tell your story” in describing the job requirements. Recruiters may attract better candidates if a project sounds interesting or uses cutting edge technology.
- When posting a position that is “hard to fill,” or has unusual requirements, it is helpful to offer a question/answer period in a format where answers can easily be shared with all Vendors, such as a short teleconference for the purpose of answering bidder questions more interactively.
- Indicate how long the job is expected to last. If you post a job for three months (for example, based on funding or the end of the fiscal year), but expect it to continue for the duration of a project, mention the possibility of a more extended engagement, which is potentially attractive both to potential candidates and vendor recruiting staff.
- The Candidate Bid Sheet Submission Form requires that vendors indicate, for each candidate, whether the Resource is presently working for a Commonwealth Agency or has done so during the past year. You may contact the Commonwealth Agency for a reference.

Notify Vendors and Sign an Agreement

1. Notify the vendor whose candidate you have selected
2. Notify all other vendors that their candidate was not selected (selection explanation not required)
 - a. If Bid was issued through COMMBUYS:
 - i. If Bid is cancelled, cancel via COMMBUYS with an amendment explaining the reason for the cancellation.
 - ii. If awarded, award the bid via COMMBUYS OR amend the bid to announce the award.If the COMMBUYS process in your Department will delay vendor notification, notify vendors by email in advance of the COMMBUYS notification.
 - b. If Bid was issued via email, notify vendors via email of cancellation or that a candidate was selected.

Once a selection decision is made, it is important to quickly notify vendors that their candidate was not selected. This courtesy will let the vendor know that their candidate is immediately available to submit for other positions.

3. Sign an agreement with the selected Vendor. A Statement of Work (SOW) template is posted on COMMBUYS ("Agency Attachments" section). You may use your own Agency's agreement, but be sure to cover all elements of the SOW template.
4. Encumber funds in MMARS, or the financial system your Agency uses, prior to the start date.

“On Board” the Resource

I-9 Form: Agencies may request copies of the I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification) form from the ITS63 Vendor for all new placements, prior to the Resource’s first day of work. If the form is requested, Agencies must review the area of the form on the right hand side of the page, about one third of the way down, beginning: “I attest, under penalty of perjury...” If the box for “An alien authorized to work...” is checked, be sure that the authorization is current based on the expiration date.

H1-B Visa Resources: The Department of Labor requires (20 CFR 655.734) the filing of a labor condition application (LCA) and a posting of a notice of the LCA filing for Resources with H1-B visas. The requirement can be met by Commonwealth Agencies by posting a copy of the notice, which the ITS63 Vendor will supply, at the Resource’s work site, in two conspicuous locations, for a period of ten days.

Representations by Resources Form: This form, attached to the contract on COMMBUYS, must be signed by all Resources on or before their first day of work.

ITS63 Employee Certification Form: The Resource must bring this form (attached to the contract on COMMBUYS) to work on his/her first day (if not submitted previously). The form must be kept in the procurement file. A copy of the form is located in the Agency Attachments section of the contract on COMMBUYS.

The “Resource Employer” is not necessarily the same as the ITS63 Vendor, whose name will appear near the bottom of the form. Review the form to ensure that the resource is eligible to provide services under ITS63. The form indicates how questions must be answered for a resource to be eligible.

During the Resource’s Engagement

Request redacted copies of W-2s for Resources working at your Agency, on or about May 1 of each year, and keep in the procurement file.

Additional Caveats and Benefits

- After a Resource has been working for your Agency for six months or more, **you may offer the Resource a position with your Agency** as a regular employee or a “Contract Employee,” provided that the Resource is not working under an H1B Visa. However, you **may not** encourage the Resource to leave their ITS63 employer and go to work for another company, such as “Low Overhead” vendor or other third party.
- Vendors must absorb the cost of **background checks** (if requested by your Agency), even if your Agency has special requirements (i.e., a child care agency may have specific requirements pertaining to child abuse or neglect). Background checks may include but are not limited to Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks.
- If the Vendor is not the Resource’s direct employer, you have the right to request and receive a **copy of the subcontract**.
- **Do not** post a job on Monster.com or other job boards until you have given the ITS63 Full Service Vendors an opportunity to find a candidate for you. Above all,

do not post the position elsewhere while it is posted for responses from the ITS63 vendors.

- **Do not** provide advance notice of postings before they are posted on COMMBUYS. All Vendors should have an equal opportunity to respond to a posting.

Additional Information

Reporting Issues or Complaints

ITS53 only had 15 vendors, whereas this Contract has over 40 Full Service vendors and 16 Niche Vendors. The SSST is asking that all contract users participate in helping to keep the contract working smoothly, so that we can benefit from the additional number of vendors without becoming overwhelmed by the number of resumes submitted or by vendors who are seeking information on upcoming opportunities or on why the Resources they submitted were not selected, dropping in without appointments, or requesting meet-and-greet sessions.

Please note, if you do a posting and are not satisfied with the quality of responses in general, it would be a good practice to email all the vendors (you may use the Vendor Listing Spreadsheet to easily obtain their email addresses for a group email), and indicate how, generally, the responses fell short. This may improve quality when you re-post the position. You may also invite vendors for face-to-face meetings if you choose, or set up a teleconference to help the vendors understand your Department's particular requirements, or answer questions vendors may have about a live posting.

A "Contract Infraction Report Form" has been posted in the Agency Attachments section of the Contract. Please use this form to report any of the following issues or other problem behavior.

- More resumes submitted than requested
- Candidates submitted at higher than the maximum rate
- Candidate "Right to Represent" form omitted if requested on the posting
- Missing information on the Candidate Submission Bid Sheet Form
- Resume fails to meet most or a large number of job requirements
- Bidder calls for information on why candidate was not selected
- Bidder calls requesting information on future postings
- Bidder contacts hiring managers or other personnel when requested not to do so
- Bidder drops in without an appointment
- Bidder requests meet-and-greet meeting
- Other

The SSST will review these reports frequently. One infraction report will not result in a vendor being suspended from new business (except in exceptional circumstances), and the SSST will first counsel and/or issue warnings to vendors regarding infraction reports. However, vendors who consistently generate infraction reports and fail to improve their behavior will be suspended from new business for a period of time or until the end of the contract.

Continuing a Resource's Engagement after the end of ITS63

Before the end of the Contract (7/1/2021), you may extend the term of your Agreement for a Resource or group of Resources for up to three years from the date you sign the extension. After ITS63 ends, the end date your Agreement cannot be extended further, and the bill rate cannot be increased. No new Agreements may be executed after ITS63 has expired.

Contract termination or suspension of a Vendor from new business under ITS63 does not automatically terminate any Agreements you have in place with that Vendor.

How to Post on COMMBUYS

Download the Job Aid "[How to Create a Solicitation Enabled Bid using a Release Requisition](#)." Follow all Steps in that Job Aid except for those items in the various steps that are customized below:

1. General tab (Job Aid Step 4)
 - a. Check the "Solicitation Enabled" box
 - b. Select "Statewide Contract" as "Type Code."
2. Items tab (Job Aid Step 7)

Click the symbol next to "Advanced Search" to see more search criteria.

For the Full Service Contract (ITS63StaffAugCat1)

 - a. Enter "ITS63StaffAugCat1" as the "Description"
 - b. Select Find It

For the Niche Contract (ITS63StaffAugCat3)

 - a. Enter "ITS63StaffAugCat3" as the "Description"
 - b. For the "Item description," enter "Niche."
 - c. Select Find It

For either Contract

Complete items 3 and 4 of Job Aid Step 7
3. Skip Job Aid Steps 8-10. You will be specifying your requirements in an attachment.
4. Selecting Vendors to receive bid notification

For the Full Service Contract (ITS63StaffAugCat1)

Skip Job Aid Steps 11 and 12. All active vendors on the Contract will be notified by default, which is the requirement for Category 1.

For the Niche Contract (ITS63StaffAugCat3)

 - a. Identify the vendors for the Niche you wish to fill (see [Niche Vendors](#) later in this Contract User Guide).
 - b. Follow the directions in Job Aid Steps 11 and 12 to select only those vendors providing services in the Niche you wish to fill.
5. Attachments tab (Job Aid Steps 17-19)

Use the “Add file” function to add the completed Job Specification Template and the Candidate Submission Bid Sheet Form.

6. Submit the requisition for approval (Job Aid Step 20). Once it has been approved, follow the Job Aid “[How to Create a Bid Using a Requisition](#).” Start with Step 25, except, on the General tab, check “Informal Bid” if you wish to be able to select a candidate prior to the close date of the Bid.

If you wish to obtain resumes both from Full Service Category 1 and Niche Category 3, complete the Requisition for Category 1 first, then clone it to create the Requisition for Category 3. Only the Items tab and vendor selection steps will need to be modified.

How to place an order on COMMBUYS

Once a service and price is determined, the ordering process is as follows (if you have awarded the bid using COMMBUYS, after it has been approved, click the "Create PO" button at the bottom of the screen and begin with Step 5 below):

1. Initiate a new requisition
2. Search for an item (Use ITS63StaffAugCat1 or ITS63StaffAugCat3) in the description
3. Select the vendor you will be placing an order with
4. Enter “1” in the Quantity field and the total amount to be spent over the life of the engagement in the Unit Cost field. Insert the following language in the special instruction box of the PO: “This Purchase Order represents the total estimated expenditure for this engagement (insert brief description), against which (identify department) will execute partial receipts in COMMBUYS upon receipt and approval of invoices, in order to record the work accomplished according to the agreed upon engagement terms. All estimated expenditures are subject to reconciliation based on invoices rendered for agreed-upon delivery of goods and/or services.” Further direction for processing partial receipts is included in the “[How to Complete a Partial Receipt in COMMBUYS](#)” Job Aid.
5. Attach the vendor quote and/or a detailed order summary
6. Submit for approval

Locating Attachments on COMMBUYS

All of the following documents are found in the "Agency Attachments" section on the COMMBUYS contract. Here are links to the [ITS63StaffAugCat1 Full Service](#) Contract and the [ITS63StaffAugCat3 Niche Contract](#). Attachments are the same for both contracts.

- Contract User Guide (this document)
- Job Specification Template
- Candidate Submission Bid Sheet Form
- Rate Cards 3 and 5
- Employee Certification Form
- Representations by Resources
- Statement of Work (SOW) template
- ITS63 RFR incorporating all amendments
- Commonwealth Standard Forms
- Vendor Listing Spreadsheet

- Infraction Report Template
- Niche Specialty Descriptions from Vendor RFR Responses

Download files by clicking the file you wish to download, then click disk drive icon under the small "down arrow."

"Posting" Process for Non-Executive Departments Who Are Not Using COMMBUYS to Post Bids

Non-Executive Departments that are using COMMBUYS may obtain quotes via email. Use the "[Vendor Listing Spreadsheet](#)" to obtain email addresses. For Category 1, Full Service, emails must be sent to all vendors on the Category 1 section of the listing. For Category 3, Niche, limit the emails to vendors in the "niche" area under which you are seeking resources. You may include Category 1 vendors in the posting when you are seeking "niche" resources in addition to the applicable "niche" vendors if you choose.

- Add the deadline (date and time) for responses as the first line of the email
- Attach the completed Posting Template and Candidate Bid Sheet Submission Form (if using) to the email
- Notify vendors via email when the candidate has been selected.

Except for the above, the directions for using this contract are the same as for entities using COMMBUYS for job postings.

Niche Specialties

For additional information, you may read the vendors' description of their services posted on COMMBUYS as "Niche Specialty Descriptions from Vendor RFR Responses" (bidders were limited to 250 words or less).

.Net - Consolidated Horizons, Inc
Accela - Pundit Systems, Razivi Application Developers, SEP Technology Consulting
Data Analysis - Meduvi LLC
EMR (Electronic Medical Record) Software Professionals - DB Healthcare, Inc.
Enterprise Mobility Management - INNO4 LLC
Forensics and Cyber Security - Tri-Com Consulting
Health IT - Meduvi LLC
Informatica - Qlarion
Java/J2EE - Consolidated Horizons, Inc
LexisNexis Time Matters - Circle Management Group, Ltd.
Meditech - Navin Haffty and Associates LLC
Next Generation Firewall - INNO4 LLC
Oracle - Unique System Skills LLC
Peoplesoft - Noblesoft Solutions, Unique System Skills LLC
Security and Risk Management - Positive BCS LLP
Software Quality Assurance - APSS FUTURISTICS LLC
Tableau - Abridge Info Systems Inc, Noblesoft Solutions, Qlarion
Websphere - Tri-Com Consulting

Strategic Sourcing Services Team Members and Advisors

Alison Cahill	Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	Member
Brian Boyd	Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development	Member
Charles Caron	Department of Public Health	Member
Eddie Pinkerton	City of Boston	Member
Edith Kwok	Department of Education	Member
Ellen Wright	MassIT (Information Technology)	Member
John Cadorette	MassDOT (Department of Transportation)	Member
Kara Banderier	Executive Office of Human Services	Advisor
Margaret Sullivan	Department of State Police	Member
MaryBeth Martinez	MassIT (Information Technology)	Member
Meng You	Executive Office of Education	Member
Rachelle Hersey	Executive Office of Administration and Finance	Member
Rose Romagna	Executive Office of Human Services	Member
Tim Kennedy	Operational Services Division	Advisor

Vendors

Here are links to the [ITS63StaffAugCat1 Full Service Contract](#) and the [ITS63StaffAugCat3 Niche Contract](#). Vendors are shown under the "Distributors" heading for each contract. Not all awards have been made yet for Category 1; see the Vendor Listing Spreadsheet for information on awards still in progress.